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ABSTRACT

Ten common beliefs about American education are presented, accompanied by the background behind the belief, information that contradicts the belief, previous attempts to cope with the discrepancy between belief and reality, and recommendations. The discrepancies are strong enough to refer to these beliefs as myths, with 10 chapters recounting 10 myths: (1) schools can save society; (2) a national standardized testing program will boost achievement in America's schools; (3) teacher unions have helped teachers and education; (4) school boards are good for American education; (5) self-esteem must come first--then learning; (6) our practices of grouping students are effective and efficient; (7) public schools are not permitted to teach values; (8) teacher evaluation ensures high-quality instruction; (9) merit pay for teachers is unethical and unworkable; and (10) large schools provide quality education efficiently for large numbers of students. Some of the chapters reflect current controversies. Others address beliefs held so long and with so little awareness that they are rarely examined. An index is included. (Contains 140 references.) (RKJ)

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